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## **Navajo President Shelly Urges Council to Focus on Developing Navajo Laws**

**FARMINGTON, N.M.** – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly urged Navajo Council Delegates to focus on changing Navajo laws during a speech at the Navajo Nation People's Convention Wednesday morning at the Farmington Civic Center.

"We have a lot of codes that are outdated," President Shelly said during a nearly 15 minute speech. "It's time that our legislators start focusing on the legislative matters of the Navajo Nation. We need laws that distinguish the roles of each branch. We need these laws to create better efficiency. The people of our Navajo Nation deserve a government that works for them, not against them."

President Shelly was one of three speakers that opened the convention, in which more than 200 people attended. The convention continues through Thursday.

"We have checks and balances in place to keep the interests of the people in mind, but the lines of responsibility are often clouded and we find ourselves micromanaging our programs," President Shelly added.

President Shelly also stated that he supports a proposed referendum that would change language in Title 2. The language change would make the Navajo people the governing body of the Navajo government, rather than the Navajo Council.

"At the very core of our government, it's the people that run this government, and not the elected leaders," President Shelly said. "Let us help our people understand the important role they play as citizens of the great Navajo Nation."

The convention plans to review the language of the proposed referendum and President Shelly asked Navajo Council Speaker Johnny Naize to move the legislation through the

Council quickly after the legislation is introduced so it could be placed on the November election ballot.

“Our government is designed to represent our People, therefore, the governing body should be the People themselves, not just the elected representatives of the people,” President Shelly said about the pending language change.

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